

What is Planning?

The act or process of making or carrying out plans; *specif.* the establishment of goals, policies and procedures for a social or economic unit <city planning> <business planning>
Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 1976

What steps are involved?

1. Prepare & adopt the work program and budget
2. Prepare & adopt ...

The Comprehensive Plan

3. Prepare & adopt the major implementation tools

Subdivision Regulations

Zoning Ordinance

Capital Improvement Program

4. Administer regulations and programs
5. Establish criteria for evaluating progress
6. Measure activities, results and impacts
7. Evaluate effectiveness of the process
8. Correct deviations from policies and regulations
9. Revise/update process components as needed

Why Plan?

- ✓ To realize the common values we all cherish: life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, etc.
- ✓ To maintain and protect the public health, safety and welfare
- ✓ To maximize efficient and effective use of public and private facilities, services and resources.
- ✓ To minimize conflicts between individual developments
- ✓ To cope with growth as well as population decline or no growth
- ✓ To preserve the unique characteristics or features of local development including historic areas and buildings
- ✓ To coordinate development by tying together – into one coordinated whole – all of the separate decisions affecting development which are made by various local officials and development interests
- ✓ To make decisions on individual projects, zoning cases, etc., in a careful and rational way based upon well-researched and well-conceived criteria – rather than in a random, ad hoc way based upon piecemeal and fragmented information generated by day-to-day crises
- ✓ To achieve the following *environmental purposes* of community planning:
 - an efficient system of circulation within the city and to the outside world, taking maximum advantage of all modes of transportation
 - adequate and economical water supply, sewerage, utilities, and public services
 - safe, sanitary, and comfortable housing in a variety of dwelling types to meet the needs of all families
 - recreation, school, and other community services of a high standard of size, location, and quality
 - orderly arrangement of the parts of the city – residential, commercial, industrial – so that each part can perform its functions with minimum cost and conflict
 - development of each part of the city to optimum standards, as to lot size, sunlight and green open space in residential areas, and as to parking and the arrangement of buildings in non-residential areas.

Why a Comprehensive Plan?

To provide a basis for:

- preparing and updating any comprehensive plan implementation tool
- making individual development decisions regarding proposed capital improvements, subdivision plats, or zoning
- documenting and justifying development decisions – in court cases, other legal matters or controversial issues or in response to questions of public liability or reasonableness
- preparing and making decisions on area wide development, including plans for parks, thoroughfares, utilities, and other public facilities, and on neighborhood, annexation or other major area plans
- preparing and giving advice to public officials, citizens, developers, etc., on development problems, questions, issues, ideas, proposals, etc
- educating all concerned about the conditions, needs, problems and opportunities in the community
- communicating the governing body's adopted policies regarding the future development of the community to all concerned

The Comprehensive Plan

A legal document adopted by the local legislative body setting forth:

- goals, objectives and policies for guiding future development.
- Standards and proposed locations for
 - land use
 - infrastructure
 - special elements
- short-term action programs (*implementation strategies*)

It may be in the form of a map with a written description and policy statements, or it may consist of an integrated set of policy statements.

Subdivision Regulations

A local ordinance that governs conversion of raw land into buildable lots and parcels. It includes:

- procedures for obtaining approval of a subdivision plat
- minimum design standards for laying out blocks, lots, streets and other physical components of a subdivision tract
- a list of public improvements (streets, curbs and gutters, sidewalks, street signs, drainage facilities, water and sewer lines, and other public utilities, etc.) required to be installed, together with construction standards and specifications applicable to those improvements
- requirements and procedures for dedicating land for open space or other public purposes or for the payment of fees in lieu of dedication
- requirements and procedures for dedicating rights of way for streets and other public uses, and for granting easements for utilities, drainage and other purposes
- procedures for plat review and payment of fees
- a description of the method for financing public improvements, specifying which costs will be borne by the developer alone, and which costs, if any, will be shared by the city
- a requirement that the design and other aspects of the new subdivision must be consistent with the city's comprehensive plan

Why regulate subdivisions?

- to promote the public health, safety, and general welfare
- to facilitate safe, orderly, and healthful community development
- to enable the sale or transfer of lots, and the recording thereof, by plat reference rather than the less efficient metes and bounds property descriptions
- to ensure that streets, utilities, schools, parks, open space, and other public facilities are adequate to serve the needs of those who will occupy and/or use the tract
- to prevent harm to persons and/or damage to land or property both within and outside the tract

Why zone?

- to promote and protect the community's health, safety, morals and general welfare
- to lessen congestion in the streets
- to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers
- to provide adequate light and air
- to prevent overcrowding of land and undue concentration of population
- to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water, sewerage, school, parks, and other public requirements
- to conserve property values
- to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the area, including sufficient land suitable for future development
- to protect and enhance the quality of the environment
- to protect and preserve areas of historical and cultural importance and significance
- to preserve and develop the area's economic base

The Zoning Ordinance

A police power measure adopted by the local legislative body in which the community is divided into districts or zones for various classes of land use – such as agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial – for the purpose of regulating the use of private land.

A map – depicting zoning district boundaries

Provisions – prescribing for each district:

- How land or buildings may be used
- Minimum lot sizes and maximum height and bulk of buildings and other structures
- Yard sizes, setbacks and other development standards governing placement of buildings and open space
- Permissible density of population to ensure that the “impacts” of any given land use do not exceed acceptable level.

Rules and procedures – for administering the zoning ordinance, processing zoning amendments, special uses, etc.

The Capital Improvement Program

A schedule, adopted by a local legislative body and usually covering six years, of one-time municipal expenditures for the acquisition or construction of major public facilities – such as water and sewer systems, streets and highways, parks, waste disposal facilities, municipal buildings, etc. The “CIP” usually lists for each needed project:

- a description and statement of need
- priority rating
- cost estimates and financing sources
- tentative construction and/or acquisition dates

Why program improvements?

- to avoid overlooking large, critically needed projects
- to balance the needs of different sectors of the community with those of the community as a whole
- to take the community's long-range needs into account each year when considering the annual capital budget
- to allow more ample time to examine alternative funding sources
- to help make the development of major facilities consistent with the community's goals and objectives, anticipated growth, and financial capabilities
- to ensure that highest priority projects are constructed or acquired first
- to adopt a more business-like and responsible approach to solving community problems and to discourage piecemeal, uncoordinated, “brush fire” approaches
- to encourage citizen interest and constructive participation in community affairs
- to facilitate intergovernmental cooperation by keeping other governments informed about the governing body's construction intentions
- to help reduce some of the risk in private development by adhering carefully to a well-publicized public facility development schedule
- to improve the development and maintenance of public facilities by requiring local officials to analyze and forecast their future needs
- to improve debt administration, financial management, utilization of financial resources, and thereby help qualify for better bond ratings